

RUN THE RACE | HOPE CHAPEL

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

Three Anchors for Living with an Eternal Perspective
Pastor Andrew Cole | Sunday 28 June 2026 | 9AM Gawler

Big Idea: *Paul learned to measure the present moment not against itself, but against the weight of glory that is coming. An eternal perspective - seeing from here to eternity - changes the way we endure, the way we invest, and the way we hope.*

Introduction

2 Corinthians 4:17–18 *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

The Apostle Paul wrote these words from a prison cell. He had been beaten, shipwrecked, and left for dead. He had catalogued his hardships in 2 Corinthians 11 - shipwrecked three times, flogged, stoned, in danger from rivers, robbers, and his own people, cold and hungry. He was not writing from a sunbathed veranda. He was writing it from that pain.

Yet he called his sufferings light and momentary. Not because they were small. Not because he was numb to pain. But because he had learned to see from here to eternity - to measure the present moment not against itself, but against the weight of glory that is coming.

This morning Andrew shares three anchors that Paul gives us for living that way - three truths that, when they settle deep into our hearts, change the way we endure, the way we invest, and the way we hope.

ANCHOR 1 ENDURE

The weight of glory outweighs the weight of suffering

ANCHOR 2 SEE

What is unseen is more real than what is seen

ANCHOR 3 INVEST

Eternity transforms how we live and give today

ANCHOR 1 | The Weight of Glory Outweighs the Weight of Suffering

Paul says our troubles are light and momentary. That is either the most tone-deaf thing ever written - or the most hope-filled. It depends entirely on what he is comparing them to.

Paul is not comparing suffering to comfort. He is not saying things could be worse. He places our troubles on one side of the scales and eternal glory on the other - and his verdict is that our troubles are light.

He is not dismissing your suffering. He is measuring it against something heavier still.

Romans 8:18 *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

The word 'consider' in that verse is an accountant's term. Paul has not arrived at his conclusion through wishful thinking. He has done the maths. He has weighed things carefully and reached a verdict. This is not blind optimism - it is what Andrew called theological arithmetic. And the numbers are not close.

Some of us here are in pain right now. A diagnosis you didn't see coming. A grief that won't lift. A season that seems like it will never end. Paul is not asking you to pretend it is not heavy. He is asking you to weigh it against something heavier still - the resurrection glory that is coming.

The Observatory Illustration

Andrew read a story of a visit to an old observatory. The guide covered every window until the room was completely dark, then made one small hole in the curtain - no bigger than a five-cent coin. A single thread of light crossed the room. She said: this is how stargazers first mapped the stars - not by staring into a blinding sun, but by letting one precise beam in.

Paul is inviting us to do something similar. Don't be overwhelmed by the full brightness of eternity. Just let one beam of it fall across your present moment. Watch how it changes everything you see.

Reflect: *What is the heavy thing you are currently placing on the scales? Paul was not writing from a comfortable place when he wrote these words - he was writing from prison, from pain, from seasons that felt like they would never end. And yet he still called it light. What would it change if you placed your situation on the scales alongside eternity?*

ANCHOR 2 | What Is Unseen Is More Real Than What Is Seen

We live in a culture that trusts what it can measure, photograph, and touch. If you can't see it, it isn't real. But Paul makes a claim that cuts directly against this: what is unseen is eternal, and what is seen is temporary.

In other words, the physical world - the one we experience with our five senses - is the less real of the two. It is the shadow. The unseen world is the substance.

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and the assurance about what we do not see.*

C.S. Lewis and the Real Narnia

C.S. Lewis captured this in *The Last Battle*, the final Narnia chronicle. As the characters pass into Aslan's country, they realise that the Narnia they had always known was merely a copy - a sketch, a prelude. The real Narnia, the permanent one, was more vivid, more solid, more fully itself than anything they had experienced before. Lewis was not writing fantasy for fantasy's sake. He was making a theological point: the unseen world is not less real than this one. It is more real.

It is because they saw the unseen that they could endure the seen.

Christians are sometimes accused of being so heavenly minded they are no earthly good. But perhaps the reverse is actually true. The people who have changed this world most profoundly have been those most deeply anchored in the eternal. Sometimes there are seasons we simply have to endure - and it is the eternal perspective that makes that endurance possible.

Reflect: *Where in your life right now do you find it hardest to believe in the reality of the unseen? What would it change if the unseen world felt more solid and certain to you than the visible world around you?*

ANCHOR 3 | Eternity Transforms How We Live Today

An eternal perspective does not produce passivity - it produces radical generosity. When you know that what is seen is temporary, you hold it loosely. You give differently. You risk differently. You love differently.

Eternity is not the reason to disengage from the present. It is the reason to invest in it more deeply - but to invest in the things that last.

Investing in Eternity

Andrew shared his personal conviction: he wanted a life that counts, and began asking what things carry eternity attached to them. Three things came clearly:

- God himself - who has eternity attached to him
- His Word - 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word will remain'
- People - who carry eternity within them

Everything else still needs to get done - but those three things are where he wants to invest his life. Not spend it - invest it. The way you would think carefully about where to invest money, he has thought carefully about where to invest his life.

And it was this conviction that shaped his love for people. When you realise that God has placed eternity within every person you meet, you want to give your life generously into them.

1 Corinthians 15:58 *Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.*

Paul's closing instruction after his great chapter on resurrection is not to float away into mystical contemplation. It is to stand firm and give everything. Eternity is not a reason to do less. It is the reason to give everything - because in Christ, nothing given for him will be lost.

Every Death in Christ Is Followed by Resurrection

Andrew's former pastor had a saying: every death in Christ is followed by a resurrection. Everything you lay at the feet of Jesus is followed by resurrection - and resurrection is so powerful and so pure that you never really have to give up anything. God changes it. Something that was perhaps dead in your life gets brought back to life in a new way.

The currency of eternity does not devalue. It only gets stronger. Confidence in what is unseen is not passive - it reshapes your calendar, your wallet, your relationships, and your risk tolerance. The person who truly believes in resurrection lives differently today.

Reflect: *What are the three to five things you are currently investing your life into? Are any of them things that carry eternity attached? Is there something God might be inviting you to lay down - trusting that every death in Christ is followed by resurrection?*

Andrew's Closing Prayer

Lord, open our eyes to the unseen. Let eternity sit heavy and beautiful on our hearts - heavy enough to shift our priorities, beautiful enough to lift our hope. Today we confess how easily we are captured by what is seen and temporary. Recalibrate us. May we live from here to eternity, with our eyes fixed on what is eternal and our hands fully given to your work. Amen.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Use these on your own during the week, or with your LifeGroup.

1. Paul called his sufferings - shipwreck, beatings, imprisonment - 'light and momentary.' He was not writing from comfort, but from experience. What is the heaviest thing you are currently carrying? What would it look like to place it on the scales next to eternal glory?

2. Andrew described Paul's perspective as 'theological arithmetic' - not blind optimism, but a careful weighing of the scales. How do you currently measure your difficulties - against what is worse, or against what is coming?

3. C.S. Lewis described the unseen world as more real than the seen world. Does that feel true to you, or does the visible world feel more solid? What would change if you truly believed eternity was the more real of the two?

4. Andrew said: 'It is because they saw the unseen that they could endure the seen.' Is there something you are currently needing to endure? How might an eternal perspective help you endure it differently?

5. Andrew identified three things that carry eternity attached to them - God, his Word, and people. What are you currently investing most of your life into? Are those things temporary or eternal?

6. His former pastor said: every death in Christ is followed by a resurrection. Is there something God is asking you to lay down? What would it mean to trust that resurrection follows?

Key Scriptures This Week

- 2 Corinthians 4:17–18 - Light and momentary troubles; fix your eyes on what is unseen
- Romans 8:18 - Present sufferings not worth comparing with the coming glory
- 2 Corinthians 11 - Paul's catalogue of hardships
- Hebrews 11:1 - Faith is confidence in what we hope for
- 1 Corinthians 15:58 - Stand firm; your labour in the Lord is not in vain